



# Washington Weekly Brief

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## On the Hill

Here's what we're tracking this week for EUCOM.

### *Bills of Interest:*

#### **HR 2003** - Ethiopia Democracy and Accountability Act of 2007

- This bill would encourage and facilitate consolidation of security, human rights, democracy, and economic freedom in Ethiopia. This would include counter terrorism and counter narcotics efforts.
- This bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.
- This bill was received in the Senate and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations, after passage in the House on October 3.

#### **HR 2228** - Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights Bill

- Closely related to HR 2003 this bill would also encourage the development of Ethiopia while also implementing counter terrorism and counter narcotics efforts.
- This bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

#### **HR 2446** - Afghanistan Freedom and Security Support Act of 2007

- This bill provides funding for programs to stabilize Afghanistan and counter the drug trade.
- This bill passed the House and was sent to the Senate, which referred it to the Committee on Foreign Relations. Star Print ordered July 17, 2007.

#### **S 3001** - National Defense Authorization Act of 2009 (House version)

- This bill authorizes military activities and programs and DoD-wide programs for 2009.
- The bill was passed by both House and Senate committees, and sent to the White House for Presidential signature September 27, 2008.
- Became Public Law No 110-417 with President Bush's signature on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **HR 2638** - Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2009

- This bill authorizes Department of Defense activities and programs for FY 2009.
- The bill was attached to the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2008 to continue appropriations for Department of Defense activities and programs that would be covered by the regular fiscal year 2009 appropriations bills.

### *Hearings of Interest:*

There are no hearings of interest scheduled for this week.

## INSIDE THE BELTWAY

The countdown keeps ticking...and the Obama Administration transition team continues its work. Late last week, the media spilled reports of a possible nomination of Senator Hilary Clinton to be Secretary of State. Aides close to the Obama camp confirmed that transition lawyers have begun the vetting and eligibility process, particularly regarding the business, corporate and philanthropic connections of former President Clinton. Washington insiders speculate the intensity of the process directed towards Senator Clinton is a solid indication that she may be on the very, very short list. Many notable voices have been publicly supportive of the idea, including some on the right. Over the weekend, former Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger and Senator John Kyl (R-AZ) both indicated that Senator Clinton could be a good choice...how much these gestures reflect true feeling and support may be up for debate. Sources also indicate that Pres-elect Obama conducted roughly a half-dozen phone interviews

with potential cabinet members last week; Secretaries of State and Treasury were the primary focus of these calls. Adding to the Clinton connection is the appointment of Gregory Craig to the post of White House counsel. To refresh the political memory, Craig defended President Clinton during the Lewinsky scandal and impeachment proceedings. Craig also defended John Hinckley, the criminal responsible for the attempted assassination of President Reagan. President-elect Obama will be meeting with Senator John McCain on Monday. As of Monday, details on the closed-door conference were limited; general indications are that the two campaign rivals would discuss how to address the country's challenges. Of course, the speculation grinder has churned out ideas of McCain being tapped for a cabinet position, but Obama aides have hinted that a McCain position in the White House is unlikely. The future of the Obama intelligence team has also come up for debate. The Washington Post reported last week that Congressional Democrats are not favorable to keeping DNI Michael McConnell or CIA Director Michael Hayden even though McConnell and Hayden have done much to restore the image and the reputation of the intelligence community since taking charge of their respective positions. Based on what they've said since the election, both McConnell and Hayden seem to be willing to stay on if asked but are not expecting to keep their jobs. The Obama camp has not announced anything yet but the argument for keeping McConnell and Hayden, at least for a transitional time-period, is similar to the argument for keeping on Secretary Gates at Defense. As a side note, the Obama transition team has also released its White House job questionnaire, a form that prospective applicants must fill out in order to be considered for positions in the administration. What the form asks applicants to disclose is a sure sign that the Obama administration is serious about properly vetting any and all that desire to work for President-elect Obama. Lobbying ties (including those of applicant's spouses), gun ownership and even traffic violations must be reported in the form. Many view these moves as proper prior planning on the part of the Obama team; some others consider the depth of inquiry to be invasive. As the information filters through, TCG will provide any and all important updates.

## TOPICS OF INTEREST

An article from the Jamestown Foundation last week reports that Turkey has recently undergone a significant number of changes within its domestic security structure. The article concludes that in terms of importance, these changes are comparable to those made by the USG when it established the Department of Homeland Security. An October meeting of the Turkish National Security Council (MGK) took place, whereupon civilian and military officials agreed that the recent rise in domestic terrorism has warranted a change in focus. As a result, a new organization to combat domestic terrorism will be created within the Ministry of Interior. In general, sources indicate that with this restructuring, many of the missions regarding CT will switch from military to civilian responsibility. Along with new projects, strategies and the creation of intelligence databases, the General Directorate for the Turkish National Police will be moved to the position of undersecretary and the Coast Guard will now be placed under its authority. Countering terror recruitment and accountability are two additional priorities of the new structure. Increased inter-agency collaboration and intelligence sharing are intended goals as well. A new undersecretary for border security will also be established in response to the threat of militants flowing from northern Iraq. Sources indicate that the goal of the new apparatus is to address terrorism comprehensively and that along with traditional military methods, terrorist organizations will be pursued politically, socially and economically. Considering the role that narcotics play in extremist funding and the new role of law enforcement in Turkey's CT effort, this restructuring may open the door for greater international dialog with Turkey on a number of law enforcement issues.

Somalia, a cauldron haven of instability and chaos, may be edging closer to the brink of total collapse...and if not, the country is certainly making news. Saturday, the President of Somalia's flailing government, Abdullahi Yusef, admitted to Somali lawmakers that the government is rapidly losing any sense of control it had over the country and that various insurgent groups may be poised to take over completely. He attributed the looming collapse to a lack of cohesion and infighting within the government itself. This is the first public

acknowledgment by any Somali politician that the country is unraveling. President Yusef admitted that the government has control of only two cities in the entire country; the capitol of Mogadishu and Baidoa, the seat of parliament. On Wednesday November 12, Islamist militants took over the southwestern port of Merka and on Saturday they seized the port of Barawe. Reports indicate that various militant groups, including the Al-Qaeda proxy group Al-Shabab, are whipping and stoning “un-Islamic” Somalis as they advance toward Mogadishu. In many cases, crowds are openly embracing Islamist fighters as they roll across the countryside; many of the recently captured cities are succumbing to extremist control without a single shot being fired. While the situation on land is dire, life off the coast is equally perilous. On Saturday, Somali hijackers seized another vessel; this time, a 330 meter oil tanker named the Sirius Star. The tanker, owned by the Saudi Arabian oil company, Aramco was flying under the Liberian flag when it was attacked 450 nautical miles Southeast of Mombasa, Kenya. The 25 member crew of the Sirius Star was composed of Croatian, British, Polish, Philippino and Saudi Arabian citizens. Interestingly, according to the U.S. Navy, the incident marks the farthest that pirates have traveled to execute an attack. Even though a multinational force has been sent to the region to help quell piracy and increasing numbers of shipping companies are employing armed security, bold attacks continue. The incident on the Sirius Star was by followed another attack on a 20,000 ton Japanese cargo ship off the Somali coast. Even though the information is limited, some experts have speculated that some of ransom money paid for the release of kidnapped crews is being funneled to various insurgent groups rampaging throughout Somalia. While piracy continues to be a major threat, a guarded shipping corridor off the Somali coast has had some success in limiting attacks. The protected zone, enacted in late August, involves constant naval patrolling, fixed and rotary wing aerial surveillance and UAV reconnaissance to monitor waters and prevent attacks. The zone establishes a safe passage route along the Somalia coast to the Red Sea and Suez Canal; is roughly 600 miles long and approximately three to six miles wide. The unit responsible for security is a group known as Task-Force 150 and has anywhere from three to 15 ships patrolling at a time. While addressing any maritime security threat involves significant logistical planning and resources, the success demonstrated by Task Force 150 could be a model for any maritime security apparatus.

### [Selected News for EUCOM](#)

- [Guinea-Bissau Votes](#)
- [Officials: Israeli Mob Boss Killed in Car Bombing](#)
- [Afghan Police Complete Course on Drugs](#)
- [ETA Dealt Decisive Blow with Arrest of Military Chief: Spanish PM](#)
- [Pirates Attack Saudi Supertanker](#)
- [UNODC, Russia to Strengthen Cooperation](#)

### [The Lighter Side](#)

#### [Quote of the Week](#)

***“It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he was never reasoned into.”***  
~Jonathan Swift

***“Through humor, you can soften some of the worst blows that life delivers. And once you find laughter, no matter how painful your situation might be, you can survive it.”***  
~Bill Cosby

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